

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 92-99, 101-103, 106-117, and 158-160 are pending in the application, with claims 92, 101, 106, 107, 108, and 109 being the independent claims. Claims 104 and 118-157 are sought to be cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Claims 92, 101, 107, 108, and 109 have been amended to improve their form. Applicants submit that this amendment places the application in condition for allowance, and does not raise any new issues requiring further search or consideration. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 92-99, 101-103, 106-117, and 158-160 are allowed.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 104 and 118-157 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Walter, et al, U.S. Patent 5,856,788 (Walter) in view of Werb, U.S. Patent 6,483,427 (Werb). Applicants' respectfully traverse this rejection.

Solely in order to expedite allowance of this case, Applicants have cancelled claims 104 and 118-157 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein, thereby rendering these rejections moot. Applicants have filed a continuation application including the subject matter of claims 104 and 118-157 contemporaneously with this Amendment and Reply.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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